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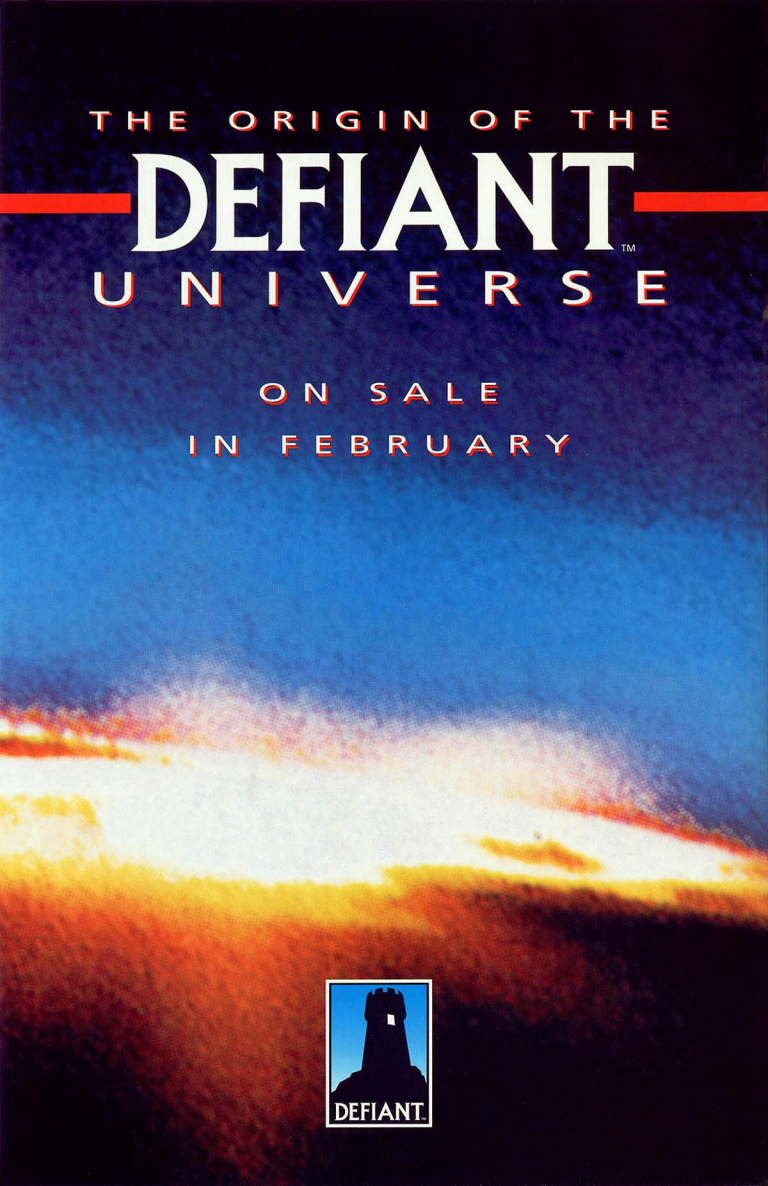
THE ORIGIN OF THE
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UNIVERSE
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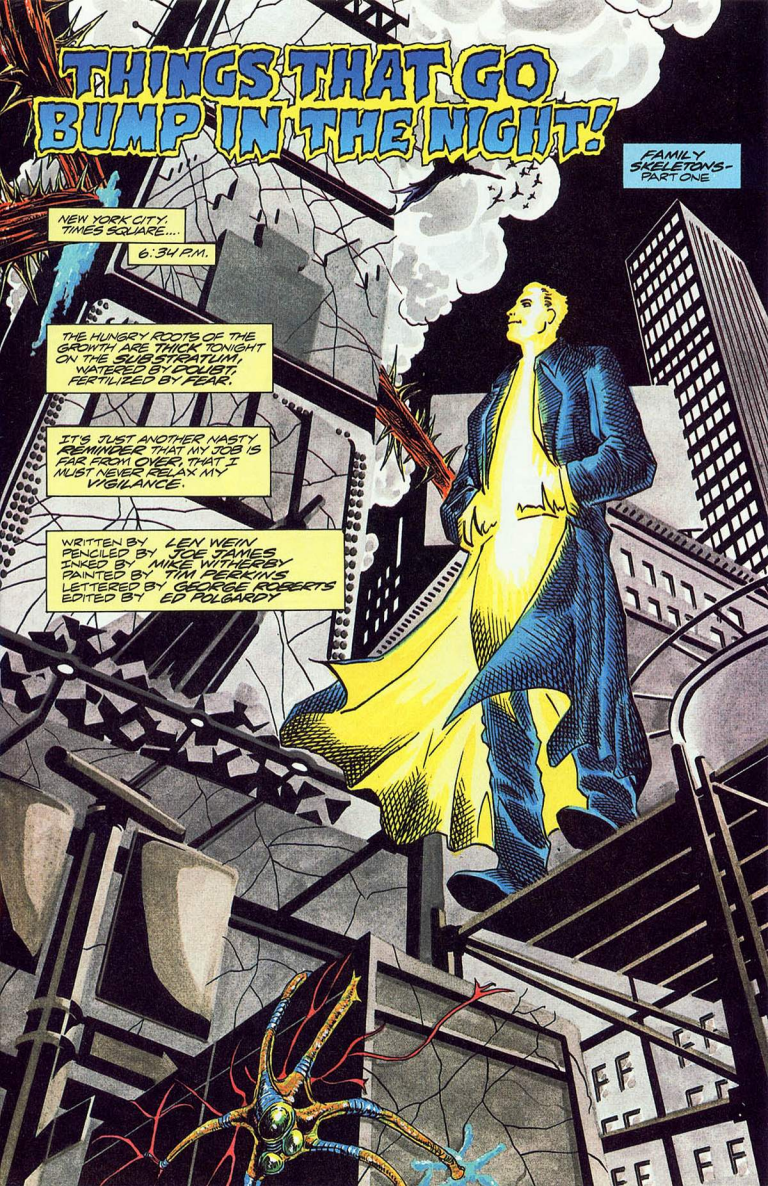
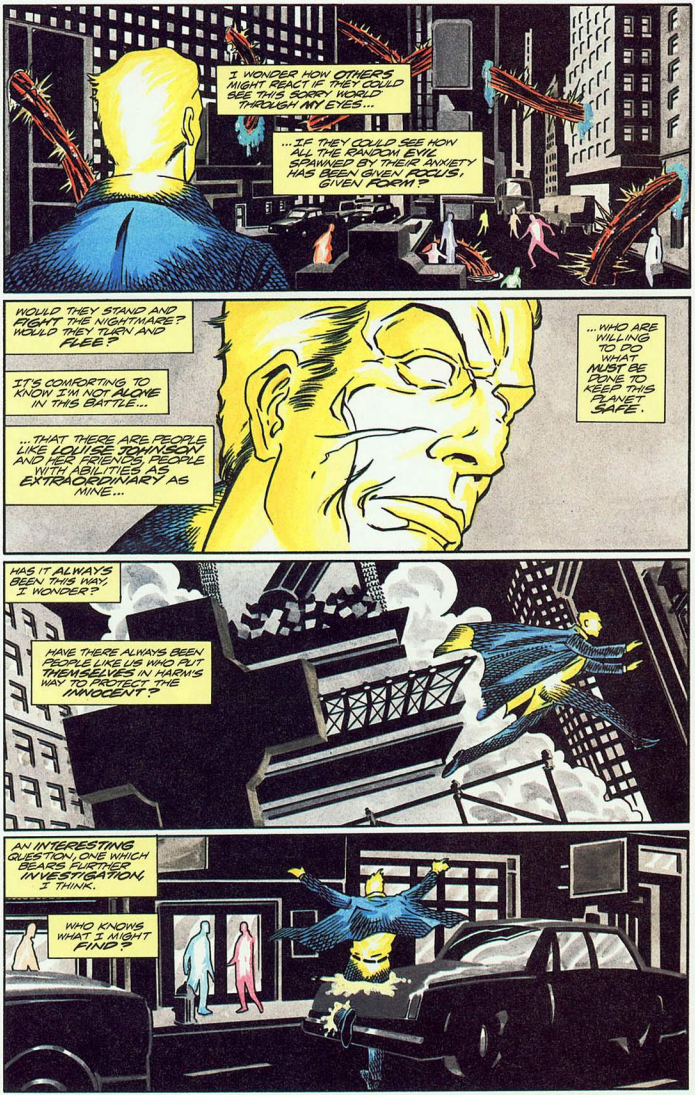
IN FEBRUARY
DEFIANT


THINGS THAT GO BUMP IN THE NIGHT!
FAMILY SKELETONS- PART ONE
NEW YORK CITY. TIMES SQUARE...
6:34 P.M.
THE HUNGRY ROOTS OF THE GROWTH ARE THICK TONIGHT ON THE SUBSTRATUM. WATERED BY DOUBT. FERTILIZED BY FEAR.
IT'S JUST ANOTHER NASTY REMINDER THAT MY JOB IS FAR FROM OVER. THAT I MUST NEVER RELAX MY VIGILANCE.
WRITTEN BY LEN WEIN
PENCILED BY JOE JAMES
INKED BY MIKE WITHERBY
PAINTED BY TIM PERKINS
LETTERED BY GEORGE ROBERTS
EDITED BY ED POLGARDY


I WONDER HOW OTHERS MIGHT REACT IF THEY COULD SEE THIS SCARY WORLD THROUGH MY EYES...
...IF THEY COULD SEE HOW ALL THE RANDOM EVIL SPAWNED BY THEIR ANXIETY HAS BEEN GIVEN FOCUS, GIVEN FORM?
FFFFF
WOULD THEY STAND AND FIGHT THE NIGHTMARE? WOULD THEY TURN AND FLEE?
IT'S COMFORTING TO KNOW I'M NOT ALONE IN THIS BATTLE...
...THAT THERE ARE PEOPLE LIKE LOUISE JOHNSON AND HER FRIENDS, PEOPLE WITH ABILITIES AS EXTRAORDINARY AS MINE...
...WHO ARE WILLING TO DO WHAT MUST BE DONE TO KEEP THIS PLANET SAFE.
HAS IT ALWAYS BEEN THIS WAY, I WONDER?
HAVE THERE ALWAYS BEEN PEOPLE LIKE US WHO PUT THEMSELVES IN HARM'S WAY TO PROTECT THE INNOCENT?
AN INTERESTING QUESTION, ONE WHICH BEARS FURTHER INVESTIGATION, I THINK.
WHO KNOWS WHAT I MIGHT FIND?

STREET'S BUSIER THAN USUAL TONIGHT. MUST BE SOMETHING IN THE AIR.
OVER THERE, FOR INSTANCE...LOOKS LIKE THE FIRST CON GAME OF SPRING.
AND WHAT'S THE OBJECT OF THIS GAME AGAIN?
JUST KEEP YOU EYE ON DE CARDS, M'MAN.
YOU FIND THE BLACK, I PAY YOU BACK. YOU TURN THE RED, YOU GOOD AS DEAD.
OKAY, M'MAN, LET'S SEE SOME GREEN. GOTTA PLAY TO STAY.
PICK THE RIGHT CARD, AN' TWENTY GETS YOU FORTY.
WELL, THAT SURE SOUNDS FAIR ENOUGH.
HERE, I THINK I'LL CHOOSE--
YOU DO KNOW THIS GAME IS CROOKED, DON'T YOU?
EXCUSE ME?
BASICALLY, YOU HAVE A BETTER CHANCE OF WINNING THE LOTTERY, WITHOUT BUYING A TICKET, AS YOU DO OF WINNING HERE.
HEY, WATCH YOUR MOUTH, OLD--
OH.
IT'S YOU.
HAVEN'T I TOLD YOU TO TAKE THIS GARBAGE SOMEWHERE ELSE?

NOW GIVE THE NICE TOURIST BACK HIS MONEY, AND HIT THE ROAD!
I--I DON'T UNDERSTAND!
SURE, MAN. WHATEVER YOU SAY.
JUST DON' BE MESSIN' WIT' MY HEAP NO MORE, OKAY?
YOU DON'T NEED TO.
JUST TRY TO BE A LITTLE MORE CAUTIOUS NEXT TIME.
Y'KNOW, MAN, YOU REALLY BAD FOR BUSINESS.
I'M STILL NOT SURE EXACTLY WHAT JUST HAPPENED HERE...
... BUT I THINK I OWE YOU MY THANK'S.
ALL JUST PART OF THE SERVICE.
ENJOY THE BIG APPLE.
EVENING, MICHAEL. EVERYTHING OKAY HERE?
JUST A LITTLE MINOR DISTURBANCE, OFFICERS.
NOTHING THAT COULDN'T BE HANDLED.
SO HOW'S IT GOIN' FOR YOU THESE DAYS?
... THINGS JUST KEEP GETTING BETTER ALL THE TIME.
TRUTH TO TELL, OFFICER...

DARK DOMINION™ #5. February 1994. Published by DEFIANT™, a division of Enlightened Entertainment Partners, L.P. 232 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016. Jim Shooter, President; Winston Fowlkes, Publisher. Published monthly. Copyright © 1994 EEP, L.P. All rights reserved. Price $2.50 per copy in the U.S. and $3.25 in Canada. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any person living or dead or any institution is intended, and any such similarity that may exist is purely coincidental. The trademarks DEFIANT, ENLIGHTENED ENTERTAINMENT, and DARK DOMINION and all of the character names and likenesses featured herein are the exclusive property of EEP, L.P. PRINTED IN CANADA.

McDonal
BILLIONS AND
SEE YOU GENTLEMEN LATER?
YEAH. SURE. YOU BET.
HEY, WHAT IS IT WITH THAT GUY, ANYWAY?
YOU KIDDIN'? HE'S NUTTY AS MY GREAT AUNT HILDY'S FRUITCAKE...
...ALWAYS TALKIN' 'BOUT HOW THERE'S DEMONS NOBODY CAN SEE, THREATENIN' T' TAKE OVER THE CITY.
STILL, I GUESS HE'S MORE HARMLESS THAN MOST.

YOU'RE LATE, MICHAEL. I WAS STARTING TO GET WORRIED.
GET YOU THE USUAL?
THANKS, LIONEL. THAT WOULD BE FINE.
IT'S BEEN A LONG DAY.

I KNOW EXACTLY HOW YOU FEEL, MY FRIEND.
BEEN ONE OF THOSE DAYS THAT FEELS LIKE A WEEK.
THAT'S IT EXACTLY.
STILL, WE ALL HAVE A JOB TO DO.
BUT SOME ARE EASIER THAN OTHERS.

OH, BY THE WAY, THERE'S SOMEONE WAITING TO SEE YOU.
SHE CAME IN A LITTLE WHILE AGO, ASKED IF I'D EVER HEARD OF SOMEONE CALLED THE GLEAM.
HMMM.
I TOLD HER I THOUGHT GLEAM WAS TOOTH PASTE, BUT I THINK SHE MEANT YOU.

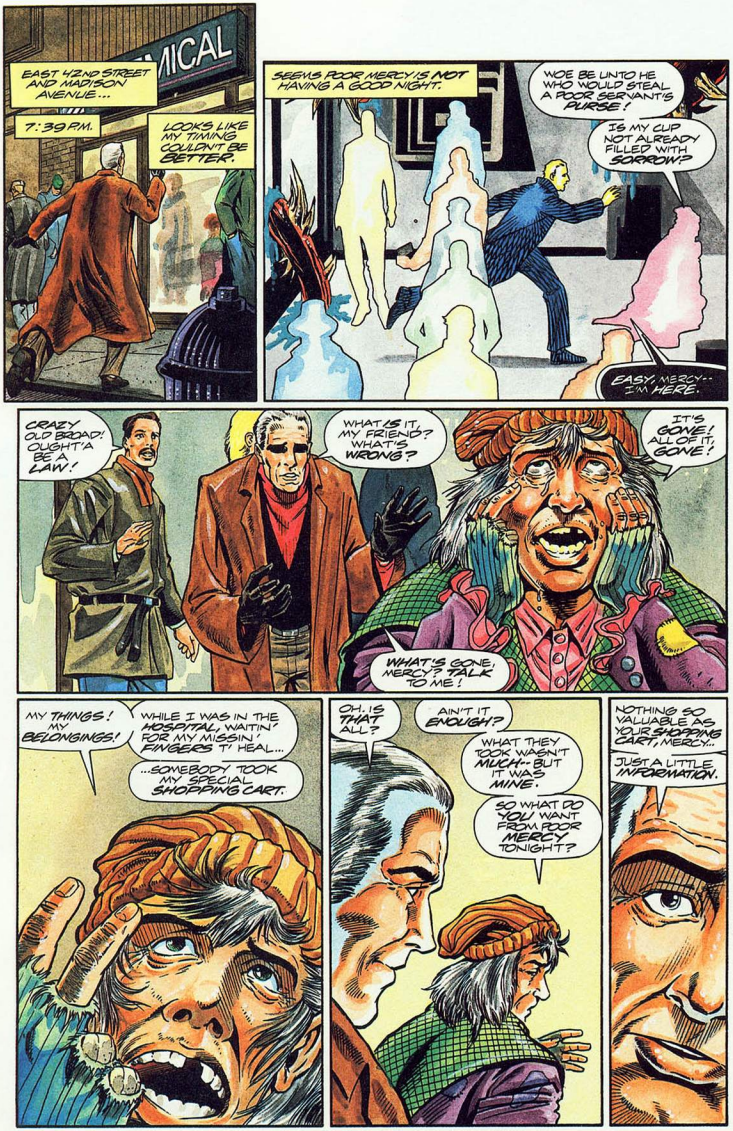
HELLO. I'M MICHAEL ALEXANDER. LIONEL SAID YOU WANTED TO SEE ME?
Y-YOU'RE MICHAEL ALEXANDER?
THE ONE THEY CALL THE GLEAM?
THAT'S GLIMMER-- AS IN GLIMMER OF HOPE. SORRY. IF I'M A DISAPPOINTMENT.
THINK YOU'D BE MORE IMPRESSED IF I WENT OUT AND CAME BACK IN AGAIN?
N-NO, OF COURSE NOT.
I'M SO SORRY. I-I DIDN'T MEAN TO BE RUDE.
I'M RACHEL COOPER.
PLEASE... SIT DOWN AND JOIN ME.
IT'S JUST THAT... WELL, FROM ALL OF THE ARTICLES I'VE READ OF YOURS, I WAS EXPECTING SOMEONE MORE... MORE IMPOSING.
IT'S OKAY. I GET A LOT OF THAT. NO OFFENSE TAKEN.
NOW, HOW MIGHT I BE OF HELP TO YOU?
IT'S MY DAUGHTER, SARAH.
SHE'S ONLY FIVE, AND LAST NIGHT SHE...
...SHE...
...WELL, SHE JUST DISAPPEARED.
PLEASE, MISTER ALEXANDER. I'VE HEARD THAT YOU'RE VERY KIND-- THAT YOU'RE WILLING TO HELP PEOPLE IN TROUBLE.
CAN YOU HELP ME FIND MY DAUGHTER?

I'M SORRY, MRS. COOPER, BUT I THINK YOU'VE BEEN MISINFORMED.
FINDING MISSING PERSONS--ESPECIALLY CHILDREN--IS A JOB FOR THE POLICE.
I DOUBT THERE'S VERY MUCH THAT I COULD DO TO HELP YOU.
NO, YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND! I'VE ALREADY BEEN TO THE POLICE!
THEY INVESTIGATED BUT FOUND NOTHING!
IF YOU WON'T HELP ME, I DON'T KNOW WHERE ELSE TO TURN!
PLEASE, BEFORE YOU SAY NO...
...LET ME SHOW YOU.
THIS IS MY SARAH.
HOW CAN YOU LOOK AT HER SWEET FACE, MISTER ALEXANDER, AND STILL TELL ME NO?
SHE'S BEAUTIFUL.
TAKES AFTER YOU.
OKAY, MS. COOPER. SUPPOSE YOU TELL ME EXACTLY WHAT HAPPENED.
AND, BY THE WAY, THE NAME IS MICHAEL.
THANK YOU... MICHAEL. PLEASE CALL ME RACHEL.
WELL, ANYWAY, SARAH'S FATHER AND I SEPARATED SEVERAL MONTHS AGO...
...AND SARAH HASN'T BEEN TAKING IT VERY WELL.

SHE'D BEEN SLEEPING POORLY, COMPLAINING EVERY NIGHT ABOUT MONSTERS IN HER CLOSET.
I JUST ASSUMED IT WAS HER REACTION TO THE SEPARATION.
BUT MY DAUGHTER WAS CRYING OUT FOR HELP, MICHAEL, AND I IGNORED HER! WHAT HAPPENED IS MY FAULT!
BUT WHAT EXACTLY DID HAPPEN?
WELL, LAST NIGHT I HEARD SCREAMING AND THE SOUNDS OF A STRUGGLE.
I RAN IN TO CALM HER--
--BUT COULDN'T FIND HER ANYWHERE! THERE WAS JUST A TANGLE OF BED-CLOTHES, AND THE CLOSET DOOR WAS AJAR.
THEN I HEARD THE FAINT SOUND OF SARAH CRYING...BUT WHERE? AND SOON EVEN THAT FADED.
MICHAEL, PLEASE, I'M PANICKED-- AND HAVE NOWHERE TO TURN!
CAN YOU HELP ME?
I'LL DO WHAT I CAN...

...BUT FIRST...
...COULD YOU CLOSE YOUR EYES FOR A MOMENT?
WHAT? BUT I--
PLEASE, WILL YOU TRUST ME?
WELL, ALL RIGHT...
LOOK AT HER! HER ANXIETY-- HER FEAR-- GIVEN FORM IN THAT!
...MAKE HER CRY... MAKE HER DIE...
YOU WANT HER, SLIME?

WELL, YOU CAN'T HAVE HER.
...GGKKE...
THERE. FEELING ANY BETTER?
WELL, I--I--
YES, I-- I GUESS I AM.
GOOD. THEN LET ME GO TALK TO A FEW FRIENDS ABOUT THIS...
...AND I'LL CONTACT YOU LATER.

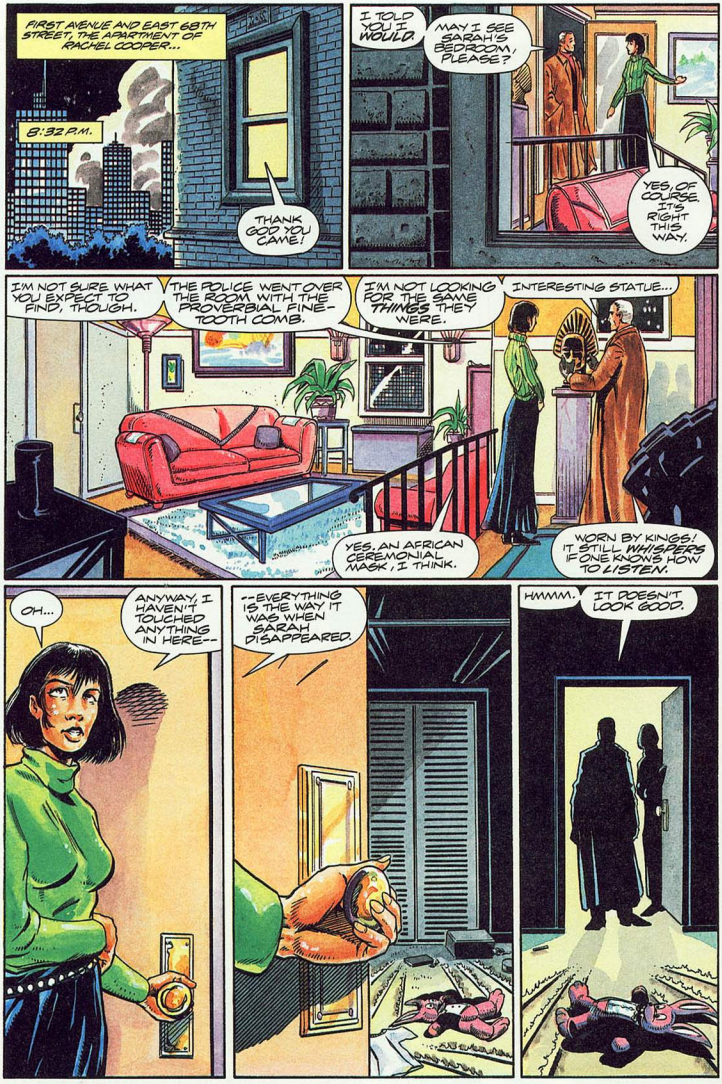

EAST 42ND STREET AND MADISON AVENUE...
MICAL
7:39 P.M.
LOOKS LIKE MY TIMING COULDN'T BE BETTER.
SEEMS POOR MERCY IS NOT HAVING A GOOD NIGHT.
WOE BE UNTO HE WHO WOULD STEAL A POOR SERVANT'S PURSE!
IS MY CUP NOT ALREADY FILLED WITH SORROW?
EASY, MERCY... I'M HERE.
CRAZY OLD BROAD! OUGHT'A BE A LAW!
WHAT IS IT, MY FRIEND? WHAT'S WRONG?
IT'S GONE! ALL OF IT, GONE!
WHAT'S GONE, MERCY? TALK TO ME!
MY THINGS! MY BELONGINGS!
WHILE I WAS IN THE HOSPITAL, WAITIN' FOR MY MISSIN' FINGERS T' HEAL...
...SOMEBODY TOOK MY SPECIAL SHOPPING CART.
OH. IS THAT ALL?
AIN'T IT ENOUGH?
WHAT THEY TOOK WASN'T MUCH-- BUT IT WAS MINE.
SO WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM POOR MERCY TONIGHT?
NOTHING SO VALUABLE AS YOUR SHOPPING CART, MERCY...
JUST A LITTLE INFORMATION.

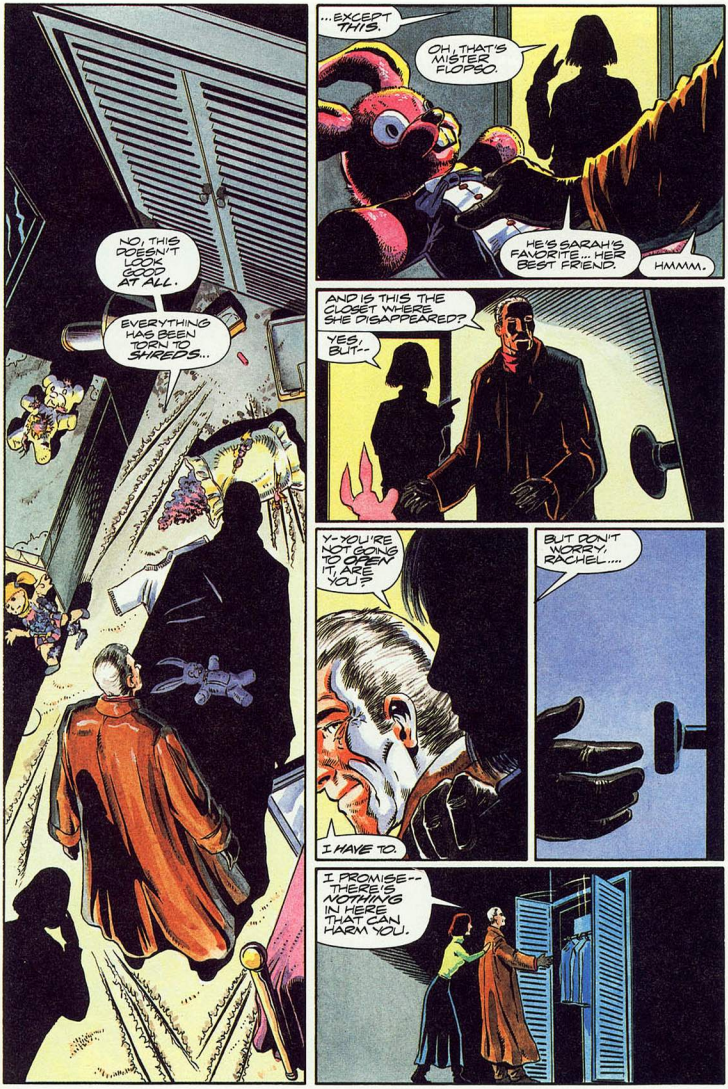
HAVE YOU EVER HEARD OF A CREATURE LIVING ON THE SUBSTRATUM THAT MIGHT HIDE IN A LITTLE GIRL'S CLOSET?
YOU MEAN... HE'S BACK?
WHO?
THE ONE THEY CALL LURK.
HE'S THE STUFF OF NIGHTMARES, MICHAEL. HE FEEDS ON THE DARKEST FEARS OF CHILDREN.
SOUNDS NASTY.
AND SO HE IS.
LURK IS REAL TO EVERY CHILD-- AND YET DIFFERENT TO EACH.
HMM. THIS COULD BE A CHALLENGE.
WANT ME T' COME WITH YA, GLIMMER?
I MAY BE A FEW FINGERS SHORT, BUT I'M STILL ONE TOUGH OLD BROAD!
THAT YOU ARE, MY FRIEND..
...BUT LETTING YOU HELP ME ONCE BEFORE IS HOW YOU LOST THOSE FINGERS.
NO, I THINK I'D BETTER HANDLE THIS ONE ALONE.
SURELY HOPE YOU CAN, GLIMMER... SURELY HOPE YOU CAN.
PORT AUTHORITY BUS TERMINAL...
7:53 P.M.
IS THIS THE PLACE, FATHER?

AYE, JUDAH. BREATHE DEEPLY, AND BEHOLD.
WE ARE COME AT LAST TO SODOM AND GOMORRAH.
IT IS HERE WE SHALL BUILD OUR TABERNACLE.
MAN, AM I GLAD TO BE RID OF THOSE TWO!
THEY GIVE YOU ANY TROUBLE?
NAH. TROUBLE I COULD HANDLE.
THOSE TWO GAVE ME THE CREEPS.
TREAD LIGHTLY, MY SON. WICKEDNESS ABOUNDS HERE AT EVERY TURN.
BUT IT SEEMS SUCH A BEAUTIFUL CITY, FATHER.
AYE, SO DO THEY ALL... AT FIRST.
H-HELP ME... COULD SOMEBODY PLEASE HELP ME?
HARK! 'TIS A SOUL IN DISTRESS. MAYHAP WE HAVE FOUND THE FIRST OF OUR FAITHFUL.
BEWARE, FATHER! YOU'VE TOLD ME THINGS ARE NOT ALWAYS AS THEY SEEM.
HAVE I NOT ALSO TOLD THEE WE MUST BE AS THE SAMARITAN AND GIVE AID WHERE IT IS NEEDED?

THE RIGHTEOUS MAN NEED NEVER KNOW FEAR.
HEY, LOOKEE WHAT WE GOT HERE.
GUESS THE CIRCUS MUST BE IN TOWN, HUH?
DID ONE OF THEE REQUIRE MY AID?
WHAT WE REQUIRE IS YOUR GOODIES, OLD MAN!
HAND 'EM OVER QUICK--AN' MAYBE YOU WON'T GET HURT.
YE CANNOT HARM ME.
I AM CLAD IN THE ARMOR OF THE LORD!
YEAH? WELL IT DON'T LOOK SO TOUGH TO--
--UUNNHH!!
OOOW!!
UUNNFF!!
WHADDAYOU, CRAZY?
YE CANNOT SPEND THY DAYS LIKE ANIMALS, PREYING ON THE HELPLESS.
YE MUST MEND THY WICKED WAYS, MY BRETHREN--
--AND WALK THE PATH OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.
HEY!

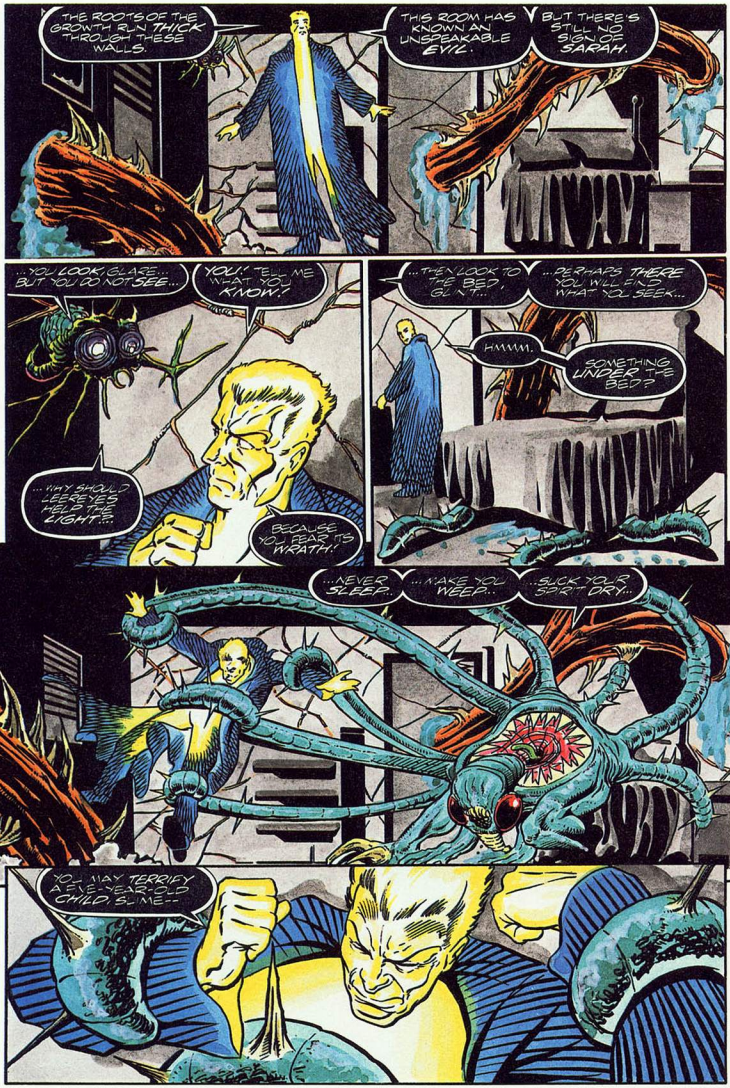
HEY, WHERE YOU THINK YOU'RE GOIN', OLD MAN?
NOBODY DISSES US LIKE THAT, THEN JUST WALKS AWAY.
WE GOTTA WHACK YOU, WHACKO!
THEE WOULD BE WISE TO RECONSIDER, BROTHER...
...WHILST THOU STILL CAN.
MAN, YOU REALLY ARE CRAZY!
CAPPIN' YOU'S GONNA BE A REAL PLEASURE.
YE WERE DULY WARNED, BROTHER!
AARRGGHH!!!
NOW YE MUST SUFFER FOR THY SINS!
ART THOU WELL, JUDAH?
I AM UNHARMED, FATHER.
THEN 'TIS TIME WE WERE ABOUT THE LORD'S WORK.
BEWARE, NEW YORK!
THE PURITAN IS COME AT LAST TO CLEANSE YOU OF YOUR SINS!

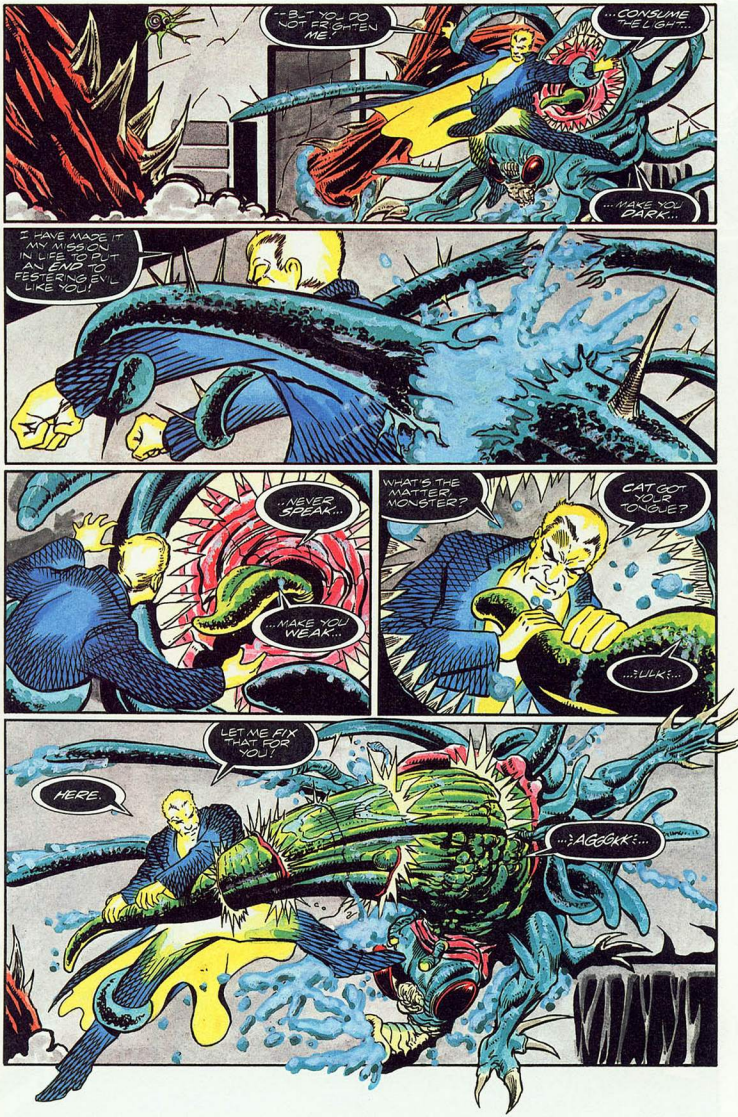

FIRST AVENUE AND EAST 68TH STREET, THE APARTMENT OF RACHEL COOPER...
8:32 P.M.
THANK GOD YOU CAME!
I TOLD YOU I WOULD.
MAY I SEE SARAH'S BEDROOM, PLEASE?
YES, OF COURSE. IT'S RIGHT THIS WAY.
I'M NOT SURE WHAT YOU EXPECT TO FIND, THOUGH.
THE POLICE WENT OVER THE ROOM WITH THE PROVERBIAL FINE-TOOTH COMB.
I'M NOT LOOKING FOR THE SAME THINGS THEY WERE.
INTERESTING STATUE...
YES, AN AFRICAN CEREMONIAL MASK, I THINK.
WORN BY KINGS! IT STILL WHISPERS IF ONE KNOWS HOW TO LISTEN.
OH...
ANYWAY, I HAVEN'T TOUCHED ANYTHING IN HERE--
--EVERYTHING IS THE WAY IT WAS WHEN SARAH DISAPPEARED.
HMMM.
IT DOESN'T LOOK GOOD.

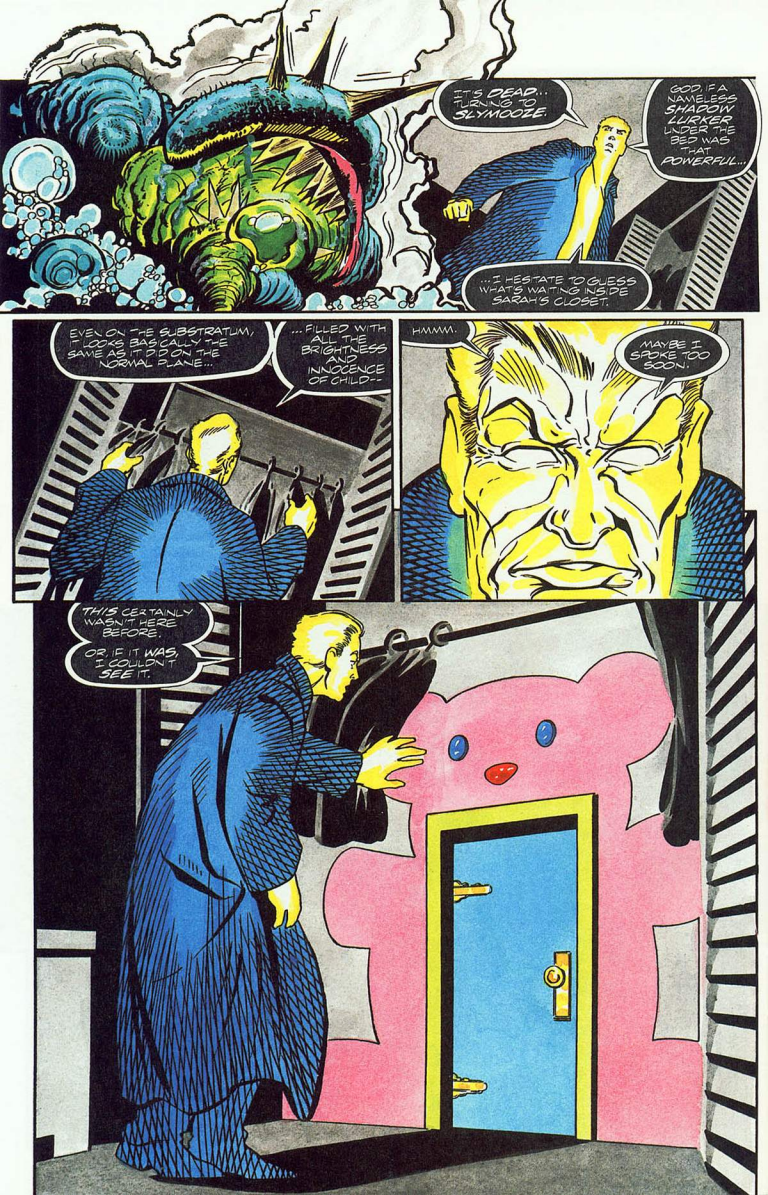

NO, THIS DOESN'T LOOK GOOD AT ALL.
EVERYTHING HAS BEEN TORN TO SHREDS...
...EXCEPT THIS.
OH, THAT'S MISTER FLOPSO.
HE'S SARAH'S FAVORITE... HER BEST FRIEND.
HMMM.
AND IS THIS THE CLOSET WHERE SHE DISAPPEARED?
YES, BUT--
Y-YOU'RE NOT GOING TO OPEN IT, ARE YOU?
I HAVE TO.
BUT DON'T WORRY, RACHEL....
I PROMISE--THERE IS NOTHING IN HERE THAT CAN HARM YOU.

INTERESTING...
EVERYTHING OUTSIDE THE CLOSET IS RUINED, BUT HERE, INSIDE--
DIDN'T TAKE YOU LONG TO REPLACE ME, DID IT?
EXCUSE ME?
JESUS, RACHEL, COULDN'T YOU AT LEAST HAVE ROUND SOMEONE A BIT YOUNGER?
HE'S HERE TO HELP US FIND SARAH, CRAIG, NOT TO SEE ME--
--THOUGH GOD KNOWS I COULD DO A LOT WORSE.
LOOK, THE LAST THING WE NEED RIGHT NOW IS SOME STRANGER INTERFERING!
I WANT HIM OUT OF HERE, RACHEL--NOW.
YOU DON'T LIVE HERE ANYMORE, REMEMBER?
SO YOU DON'T DECIPE WHO--
HELLO. I'M MICHAEL ALEXANDER. AND YOU ARE?
CRAIG COOPER, SARAH'S FATHER.
RACHEL'S HUSBAND
AND I STAND BY WHAT I JUST SAID...
I DON'T THINK YOU SHOULD BE HERE.

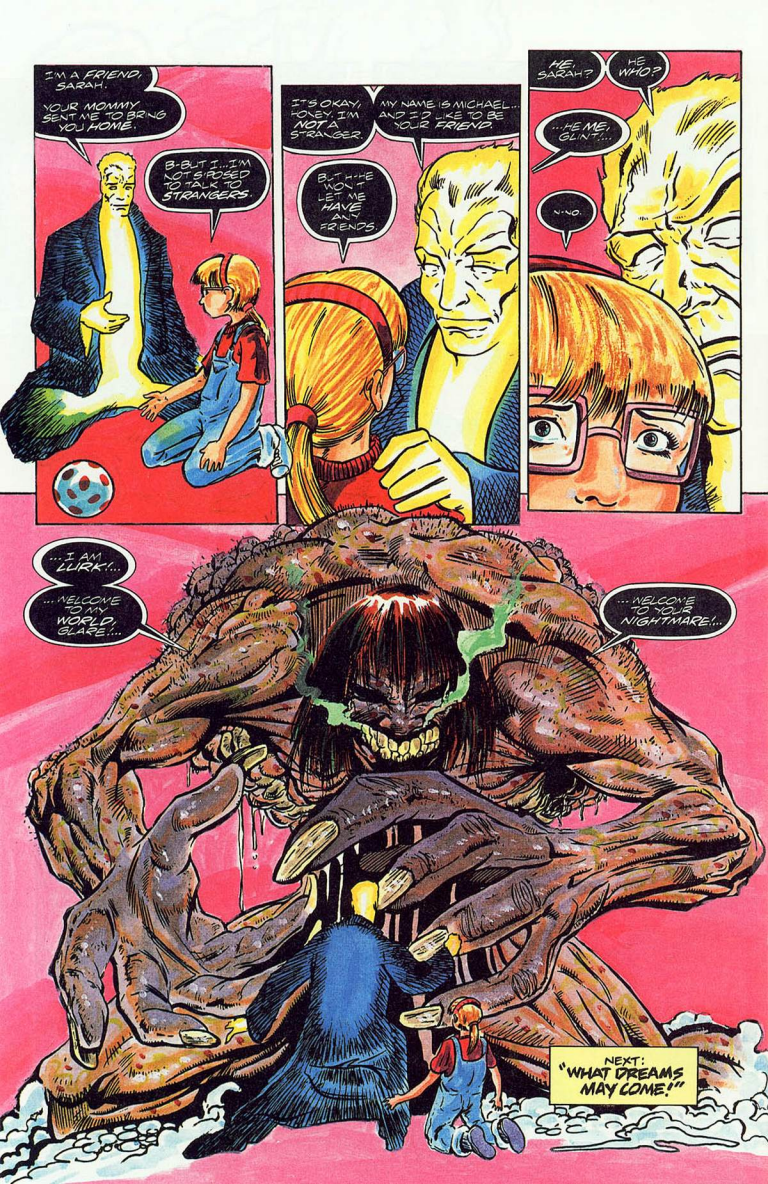
SARAH IS MY DAUGHTER, TOO, REMEMBER?
ONLY BECAUSE I HAVE NO LEGAL WAY OF PREVENTING IT!
DO YOU REALLY HATE ME THAT MUCH?
HATE IS TOO MILD A WORD FOR IT. I--
I...
I'M SORRY. I DIDN'T REALLY MEAN THAT.
NEITHER DID I.
I'M JUST SO WORRIED ABOUT SARAH. WHAT COULD HAVE HAPPENED TO HER?
THAT'S WHAT I'M HERE TO FIND OUT, MISTER COOPER.
LOOK, I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU THINK YOU CAN ACCOMPLISH THAT THE AUTHORITIES COULDN'T--
--BUT, AT THIS POINT, I'M WILLING TO TRY ANY THING THAT MIGHT HELP MY DAUGHTER!
HMMM.
YES, I'M SURE YOU ARE.
NOW, IF YOU WILL BOTH PLEASE EXCUSE ME...
...I NEED TO BE ALONE IN HERE FOR THE NEXT FEW MINUTES.
AND WHATEVER YOU MIGHT HEAR, PLEASE DON'T COME BACK UNTIL I CALL YOU.
FINE. WE'LL BE RIGHT OUTSIDE.


THE ROOTS OF THE GROWTH RUN THICK THROUGH THESE WALLS.
THIS ROOM HAS KNOWN AN UNSPEAKABLE EVIL.
BUT THERE'S STILL NO SIGN OF SARAH.
YOU LOOK, GLAZE... BUT YOU DO NOT SEE...
YOU! TELL ME WHAT YOU KNOW!
...WHY SHOULD LEERYES HELP THE LIGHT?...
BECAUSE YOU FEAR MY WRATH!
...THEN LOOK TO THE BED, GLINT...
...PERHAPS THERE YOU WILL FIND WHAT YOU SEEK...
HMMM.
SOMETHING UNDER THE BED?
...NEVER SLEEP...
...MAKE YOU WEEP...
...SUCK YOUR SOUL DRY...
YOU MAY TERRIFY A FIVE-YEAR-OLD CHILD, SLIME--


...BUT YOU DO NOT FRIGHTEN ME!
...CONSUME THE LIGHT...
...MAKE YOU DARK...
I HAVE MADE IT MY MISSION IN LIFE TO PUT AN END TO FESTERING EVIL LIKE YOU!
...NEVER SPEAK...
...MAKE YOU WEAK...
WHAT'S THE MATTER, MONSTER?
CAT GOT YOUR TONGUE?
...?ULK!...
LET ME FIX THAT FOR YOU!
HERE.
...?AGGGKK!...


IT'S DEAD... TURNING TO SLYMOOZE.
GOD, IF A NAMELESS SHADOW LURKER UNDER THE BED WAS THAT POWERFUL...
I HESTATE TO GUESS WHAT'S WAITING INSIDE SARAH'S CLOSET.
EVEN ON THE SUBSTRATUM, IT LOOKS BASICALLY THE SAME AS IT DID ON THE NORMAL PLANE...
...FILLED WITH ALL THE BRIGHTNESS AND INNOCENCE OF CHILD--
HMMM.
MAYBE I SPOKE TOO SOON.
THIS CERTAINLY WASN'T HERE BEFORE.
OR, IF IT WAS, I COULDN'T SEE IT.

HMMM.
DOOR ISN'T LOCKED...
...AND IT'S JUST BARELY LARGE ENOUGH FOR ME TO FIT THROUGH.
NOW WHO COULD REFUSE AN INVITATION LIKE--
OH.
SO THIS IS A LITTLE GIRL'S NIGHTMARE MADE MANIFEST.
YOU'D THINK IT WOULD BE MORE--
HUH?
SOMEONE'S WEEPING.
SARAH?
:EHUH EHUH! EHUH EHUH:
HANG ON, CHILD... I'M COMING.
IT'S OKAY, SARAH. YOU'RE NOT ALONE HERE ANYMORE.
I'VE COME TO HELP YOU.
:EHUH EHUH EH--:
WHO? WHO ARE YOU?


I'M A FRIEND, SARAH.
YOUR MOMMY SENT ME TO BRING YOU HOME.
B-BUT I...I'M NOT S'POSED TO TALK TO STRANGERS.
IT'S OKAY, JOEY. I'M NOT A STRANGER.
MY NAME IS MICHAEL... AND I'D...LIKE TO BE YOUR FRIEND.
B-BUT H-HE WON'T LET ME HAVE ANY FRENDS.
HE, SARAH?
HE WHO?
...HE ME, GLINT...
...NO.
...I AM LURK!...
...WELCOME TO MY WORLD, GLARE!...
...WELCOME TO YOUR NIGHTMARE!...
NEXT: "WHAT DREAMS MAY COME!"

letters TO THE EDITOR

DEFIANT welcomes your comments.

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Dear Editors:
Flipping around the radio dial several months ago, I was thrilled to catch a snippet of an interview with Jim Shooter on National Public Radio's *Fresh Air*. Having worked for Jim during his Editor in Chief days at Marvel, I had the privilege of seeing this talented-beyond-belief, gentle, humble, generous man build that company into the empire it is today. So I was particularly delighted to hear about his latest endeavor: the birth of the DEFIANT Universe.

DARK DOMINION, in particular, is a treat for me. I rarely allow myself to step into the world of superheroes (with enough real-life drama to drown in, who needs comics?), but the book is smart, the artwork's fantastic, and the story's engaging —as if a story set in New York can be anything but. What can I say? Thanks for a quality book.

Sincerely,
Eve Frebergé
Norristown, PA

Dear DEFIANT Comics,
After reading *DARK DOMINION* #s 1 and 2, I have nothing but praise for everyone involved. I used to buy comics quite frequently, but then the market shifted and many titles that weren't good at all began to show up, so I discontinued. I've recently begun again, and I'm glad that I waited until now, because *DARK DOMINION* was the first new series that caught my eye. This was for several reasons:

One: The artwork and color in issues #1 and #2 are rich and glowing, and the transitions between the real world and the quantum field mesh nicely while still conveying that these two planes exist separately.

Two: The characters are all great. It was easy to become intrigued by them, because they were all introduced as complete, believable individuals. Michael Alexander is truly a hero that one can relate to. One of the reasons that I stopped reading comics was because the heroes, not to mention the villains, were all becoming just too powerful and, with that, too unbelievable. Michael Alexander certainly does have great power, but he also has limits and is aware of them. I think the most unique thing about Michael is that he's a much older man, instead of just another tall, muscular, dashing young fellow who simply goes about bashing bad guys.

Three: The overall story is fascinating and brimming with potential

for further development. The first two issues make it very easy to believe that there really are demons spawned by our own fears that are feeding off us and driving us to do the terrible things that find their way onto CNN.

In closing I'd like to say that I'm very impressed with all that has been done to the series. Everyone who has had a hand in it should be proud. *DARK DOMINION* definitely has an admirer in me, so keep up the good work.

Sincerely,
Chris Schwarzkopf
Northwood, OH

Dear Mr. Shooter,
First of all, I would like to congratulate you on winning the [Marvel] lawsuit and also on founding DEFIANT (though I know this is kind of late).

For once I was right. One-and-a-half years ago, I started getting into comics seriously. I was buying lots of them, but then I got fed up—you should see the rubbish the other companies are churning out—and stopped collecting. When I saw the advertisement announcing the coming of DEFIANT, I decided to give your company a try: I've always been a great fan of yours. Well, Mr. Shooter, all I can say is that I'm very impressed. You got me interested in comics again. I even got another friend of mine reading only DEFIANT books. We both found *WARRIORS OF PLASM* very good (the best, actually), and we particularly like the way the heroes and heroines are depicted. No bulging biceps, just average Joes and Janes. *DARK DOMINION* is also very good. It's just too bad Steve Ditko couldn't do the penciling. But now I have another favorite artist: Joseph A. James!

DEFIANT now
and forever,
Adrian Tai
Selangor Darul
Ehsan, Malaysia

Mr. Shooter:
At this writing, I've only had the opportunity to read *WARRIORS OF PLASM* #s 1through 4 and the first two issues of *DARK DOMINION*. This is great stuff you have here! I have a few specific comments and questions....

First, the cover to *DARK DOMINION* #1 is the best DEFIANT cover to date. I realize there haven't been many, but the contrast between the bright "real world" and the evil that is suggested in the *DARK* logo is excellent.

Second, the Org of PLASM is supposed to be alive, right? Here's an idea: How about giving your *WARRIORS OF PLASM* logo the appearance of life? Why not change the shape or form each month?

Third, now that Marvel has lost the lawsuit, will you be changing *WARRIORS OF PLASM* back to just *PLASM*?

Thanks for such entertaining comics. I'll be looking forward to each new title you publish.

Sincerely,
Damian B. Caprio
Red Bank, NJ

The WARRIORS OF PLASM name and logo each will remain as is.

Dear People,
I've been reading comics from habit recently, but *DARK DOMINION* has enthused me again. I see optimism and hope in your comic. Glimmer didn't just smash the bad guy in McDonald's [issue #1]—he could see he was a victim of fear-hungry demons and needed help, which he offered in the short term. But ultimately it is up to the individual to deny their demons food.

You've set up a wonderful structure to explore how each individual feeds their own demons, with as many story opportunities as there are people in New York. Will they be told in the regular comic,

though, or will you concentrate on the Glimmer/Chasm conflict?

Thanks for taking me far beyond my own imaginary limits. I only wish I could return the favor.

Yours sincerely,
Ian Cairns
North Shields,
Tyne and Wear
England

The stories in DARK DOMINION will have many different themes, including the Chasm/Glimmer conflict and how people deal with their demons/fears.

Dear Mr. Shooter,
The first two issues of *DARK DOMINION* were great. The story is a much-needed break from the typical superheroes-in-tights kind of stuff that floods the market. And I liked the scientific tidbits in the second issue's letters column; they were very interesting. I'm also pleased that you haven't used any gimmick covers (your readers are not apes and do not have to be attracted to your books by way of making them shiny and overpriced). Great work, people! Keep up the defiance!

Your reader,
Dann Milich
Central Point, OR

P.S.—I hope to see Michael Alexander team-up with other DEFIANT characters sometime soon.

Dear *DARK DOMINION* Crew,
The tale of Glimmer is unraveling mysteriously and wonderfully. I thought the "smart" building was a great touch, but what of Chasm's mate? It seems as though she didn't want any part in his evil deeds. I think she might actually be against him in a small way, because she's shown unlocking the doors for the people of the Bowels to get some food. Hopefully, later issues will prove or disprove my theory.

So far the characters are pretty cool. I hope Glimmer can work out his financial problems so he isn't forced to join his friends in the Bowels.

All I can say is "a job well done." Keep it up.

Sincerely,
Jon M. Hallock, Jr.
Williamsville, NY

Mr. Shooter,
I'd like to express how much my husband and I have enjoyed the *DARK DOMINION* binder and books. I myself am not a big comic book reader (my husband nearly forced me to read the first issue), but I must say, I really enjoyed it. I was still thinking about what I read after several days. I guess you could say I'm hooked!

I'm anxiously awaiting issue #3 and I hope this book never loses its ability to captivate us. We've seen the light!

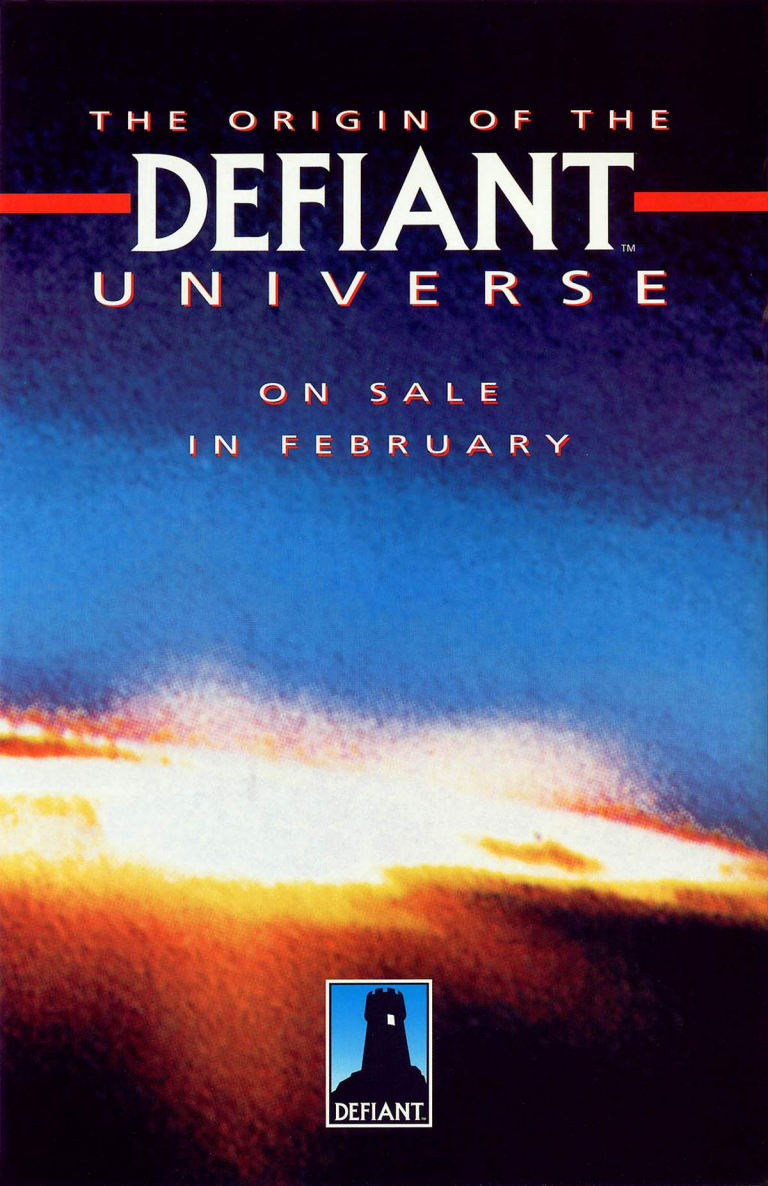
Sincerely,
Kari and
Leroy Burgert
Mustang, OK

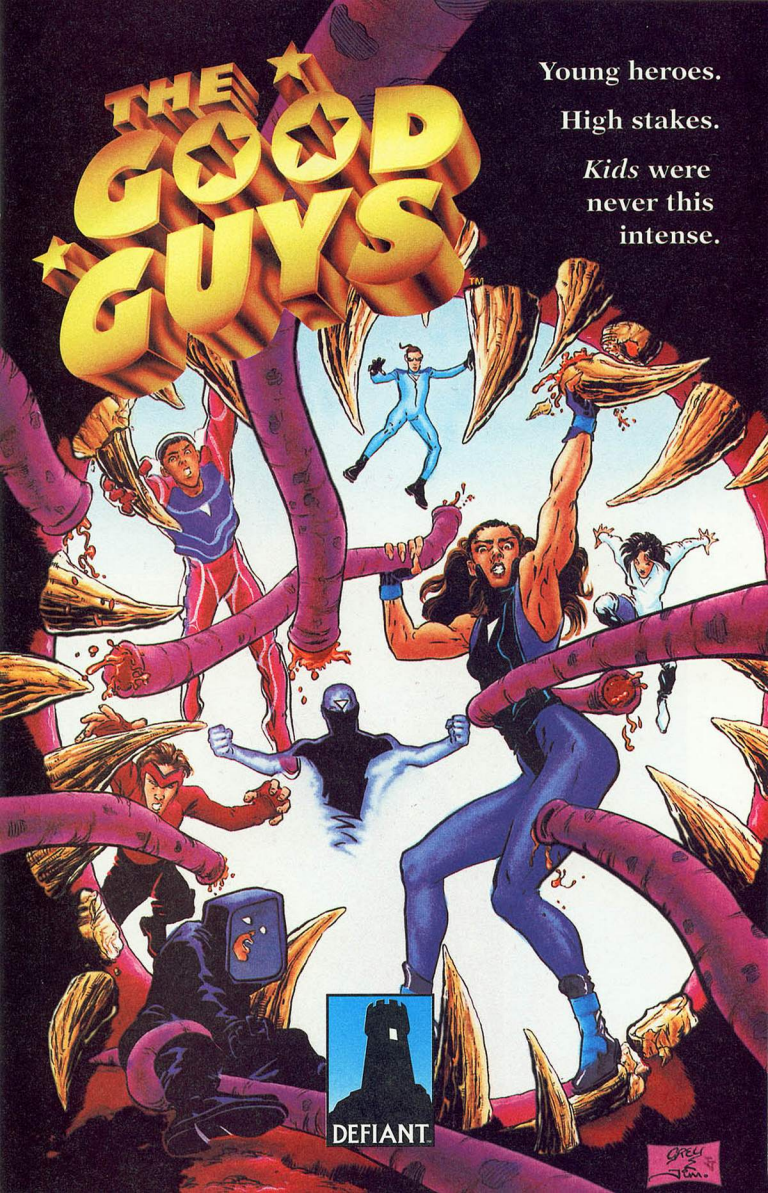
P.S.—We've also read *THE GOOD GUYS* #1, and it looks like a winner too!

Dear DEFIANT,
I read an article about *DARK DOMINION* in Wizard #27 a couple of months ago. It aroused my curiosity, and I ended up purchasing the book at my local comic book store. When I read it, I said to myself, "Wow! A comic book that actually has a good story!" And the art complements the words as well! Soon after, I bought all of your other titles, including the [*WARRIORS OF PLASM*] graphic novel. (I can't wait to see *WAR DANCER*!)

Besides putting out good books, you also care about your readers! Why do I say this? Because a few months ago I wrote you a letter, and a few weeks later I got a postcard that thanked me for the support. To this I say, "No problem!" Keep making quality comic books, and I'll support you 100%.

In defiance,
Paul Kelley


THE ORIGIN OF THE
DEFIANT™
UNIVERSE
ON SALE
IN FEBRUARY
DEFIANT


THE GOOD GUYS
Young heroes.
High stakes.
Kids were never this intense.
DEFIANT

Jim Shooter
EDITOR IN CHIEF

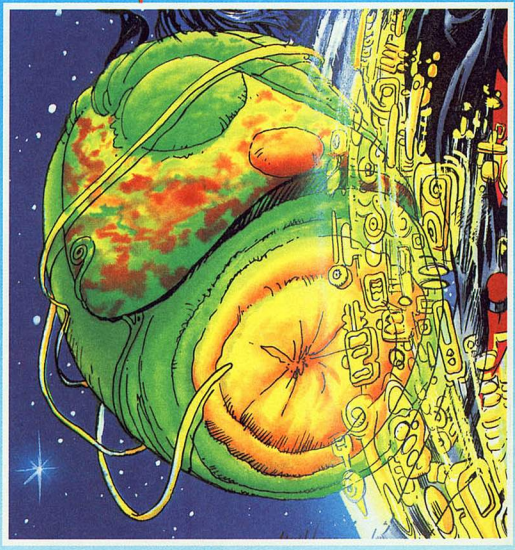
Happy Birthday, DEFIANT. One year ago, on February 18th, DEFIANT emerged from a gestation of hopes and dreams into vivid reality—for us, here at the plant, anyway. Our first issue, *Warriors of PLASM #1* didn't appear until August of last year, so it seems like were only half a year old to you DEFIANT people who don't gather at the office every day. Either way, 1994 is our first full year together—and what a year it's going to be!

This summer DEFIANT will publish its first mega-crossover—a story so big it involves every DEFIANT title. Sure, everybody does crossovers, but not like this.

The crossover story is called *SCHISM*. It's the reason why there's a DEFIANT Universe. It profoundly involves every DEFIANT personage.

If you live in the universe, it involves you.

SCHISM is a great story, not a gimmick to force you to buy titles you don't want. The story is deeply rooted in each DEFIANT series. Every second of every story from DEFIANT has been, is, and will be the foundation of *SCHISM*—so, in fact, the story has already begun. However, the essence of *SCHISM* will appear in four graphic novels, one a week, on sale the last two weeks of July



and the first two weeks of August.

SCHISM is being written and designed by myself and David Lapham, with powerful help like Len Wein, Janet Jackson, Alan Weiss and others—people who invented the mega-crossover, revolutionized it with UNITY a couple years back, or both.

You're going to want to read *SCHISM*.

Again, the story has already begun. All the universe is involved. Watch the weave develop and be ready for things you've never seen the likes of before. I do not say these words lightly.

One more comment: A retailer friend told me that it's a bad time for comics, that most companies are dying or pulling in their horns, and that nothing new and exciting was on the horizon. So I told him about *SCHISM*—and that DEFIANT was thriving, by the way.

Blew him away.

Now is the time to build, to grow, to do great works. Now is the time to be DEFIANT.

1994 is going to be the Year of DEFIANT. The first full year. The first of many.

Now is the time for a great story.

SCHISM.

What a year it's going to be!

Defiantly,

FYM

WARRIORS OF
PLASM
THE COLLECTED EDITION
Including
THE ZERO ISSUE,
THE SEDITION AGENDA,
and
SPLATTERBALL
WITHERBY

Deborah Purcell
EDITORIAL DIRECTOR

After six months or fewer in existence, *WARRIORS OF PLASM*, *DARK DOMINION*, and *THE GOOD GUYS* have become such an integral part of the comic book lexicon, it's hard to believe that only a year ago they didn't exist. It's been a phenomenal experience, this past year, seeing these titles conceived, developed, created, and shepherded through production. I have worked for many years, with many talented individuals, but I don't think I have ever seen so much talent concentrated at one time in one endeavor—the creation of the DEFIANT Universe.

In no particular order, I'd like to acknowledge these exceptional and dedicated creators without whom DEFIANT would not be the exceptional publisher that *it* is and will continue to become. Thanks, then, to...Jim Brown, Keith Wilson, Alan Weiss, Adam Pollina, Grey, Phil Nutman, Len Wein, Charles Yoakum, Bob Downs, Joe James, Rob LaQuinta, George Roberts, Agnes Pinaha, Steve Leialoha, Marcus David, Kenny Lopez, Chris Claremont, José Marzan, Greg Boone, Tom Ziuko, Oclair Silverio, Rod Ollerenshaw, Benny Jung, Su McTeague, Tim Perkins, Charlie Adlard, Jan Childress, Mike Witherby, Sandy DiPasquale, Mike Barreiro, Bob Sharen, Bob Smith, Mike DeLepine, Alex Jay, Steve Ditko, Dave Cockrum, and last but by no means least, David and Maria Lapham.

I am very grateful for the experience of working with each and every one of them.

And so has ended 1993, year one of DEFIANT, and on we've moved into 1994...and, judging from what we've got on the drawing boards, it is bound to be a happy year indeed!

In just a few weeks from now, on February 22, our next new title—WAR DANCER—will thunder into existence. It is an extremely forceful book, with elements of power, grace, pathos, and mysticism. It raises many questions about the origins of the DEFIANT Universe, including PLASM, and over time it will reveal deep and compelling answers.

A month later, on March 29, a title with equal splendor and majesty—CHARLEMAGNE—will launch, inviting readers into an odyssey of purity and pain and redemption. It features exotic settings and situations, and its protagonist—Charles Smith—will prove to be one of the most profoundly interesting heros ever to grace the pages of a comic book.

(Be sure to watch for the issue when War Dancer and Charlemagne *meet*!)

Three other titles now in development are DOGS OF WAR, GLORY, and THE GREAT GRIMMAX. DOGS is deliciously gritty, GLORY may take the industry by storm with its utterly unique heroine, and THE GREAT GRIMMAX will give new meaning to the phrase "a stranger in a strange land."

Here at DEFIANT we're working hard to publish comics that you'll enjoy, that you'll ponder, that will take you on an exciting visual journey—and that you'll want to read again and again and again. Your input about any facet of the process is appreciated by both our staff and our freelancers. We'll look forward to working *for* you, and hearing *from* you, in this new year. Happy 1994!

Deborah Purcell

CHARLEMAGNE™

Ed Polgardy

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

The day of the DEFIANT Christmas party was a blast—from the productive company powwow in the morning to the catered office shindig that ended around 11:00 P.M. that night.

For me the excitement began early, when I was called into a creative jam session with a number of our top-gun artists. David Lapham and Alan Weiss were there, side-by-side with Grey, Joe James, and Adam Pollina. We forged the path our Universe would take throughout the summer and created new characters as well, assigning them to our pencilers, who then designed them. (One of the characters I conceived was given to Dave Cockrum, the first comic book artist I ever met, back when I was 15 years old!) Throughout the day, key elements of our overall storyline fell into place, and *there* was Jim Shooter, in the center of it all, orchestrating the creative process like some master conductor in the middle of a wonderful symphony.

Looking around me, I suddenly realized how lucky I was, being able to participate in something I used to dream about when I was a kid: developing story concepts with some of the biggest names in the industry!

The minute the meeting was over, I had to rush to the Port Authority Bus Terminal and meet my wife, Karen, who was coming into Manhattan to attend our Christmas celebration. On the way back to the office, we passed Times Square, and she asked me how I liked working in the Big Apple, doing what I'd always dreamed of. A shiver ran up my spine as I mouthed the words "I love it"—and suddenly I wondered how many other people in the world were as fortunate as I.

The party began at 6:00 P.M. Other noted people in the industry (both old and new), like Chris Claremont, Bob and Agnes Pinaha, and José Marzan entered the mix, and more creative juices began to flow. Karen was surprised by how excited and enthusiastic everyone sounded when they were talking about their work.

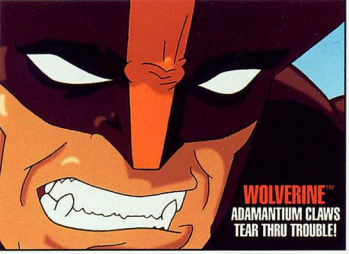
Around nine o'clock, she and I headed out onto the office balcony, which has a splendid view of the Empire State Building. We stared at the awesome tower, savoring its red-and-green holiday lights. Suddenly a shooting star flashed through the pitch-black sky behind it. "Did you make a wish?" Karen asked me, and I found myself groping for an answer. "No," I finally responded. My mind was so focused on all of the exciting things happening at DEFIANT, I didn't even notice the star, or mind that I had missed it. Most of my wishes had already been fulfilled, and I silently thanked God for helping me realize my dreams.

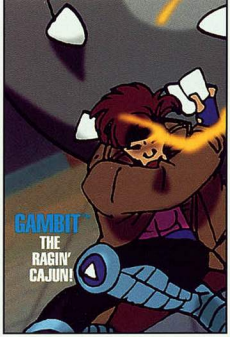
Ed Polgardy

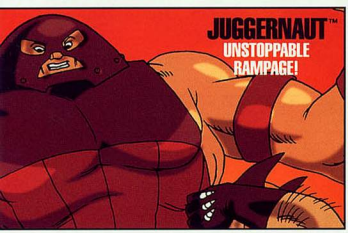
"Have you been tweaked lately?"

WARRIORS OF PLASM™

DEFIANT







SPIDER-MAN® AND THE X-MEN™ TEAM UP IN ARCADE™'S REVENGE

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